

## CLAIMS

1. An imaging apparatus for recording captured images, comprising:

- a plurality of connector units for connecting
- 5 removable storage medium, respectively;
- a first storage medium that is connected to a
- first connector unit among the plurality of connector
- units and stores a plurality of image data as an object
- of image retrieval;
- 10 a second storage medium that is connected to a
- second connector unit among the plurality of connector
- units and stores key image data as a retrieve condition
- that was generated independently from the image data;
- and
- 15 a retrieval unit that retrieves image data from
- the first storage medium that is similar to the key
- image data read from the second storage medium.

2. An imaging apparatus for recording captured images, comprising:

- a first storage medium that stores a plurality of
- image data as an object of image retrieval;
- a second storage medium that is of a different
- kind to the first storage medium and which stores a key
- 25 image data as a retrieve condition that was generated
- independently from the image data; and

a retrieval unit that retrieves image data from the first storage medium that is similar to the key image data read from the second storage medium.

5     3.   The imaging apparatus according to claim 1 or 2, wherein, when a third storage medium was connected to the imaging apparatus in place of the first storage medium, the retrieval unit retrieves image data from the third storage medium using the key image data that  
10   was used with respect to the first storage medium.

4.   The imaging apparatus according to any of claims 1 to 3, further comprising:

15       a display unit that displays, as candidate store areas for retrieved image data, a plurality of candidate store areas including the first kind of storage medium and the second storage medium;

      a selection unit that selects a storage medium as a store area from the plurality of candidate store  
20   areas that were displayed; and

      a control unit that writes the image data that was retrieved onto the storage medium that was selected.

5.   The imaging apparatus according to any of claims 1 to 4, wherein the second storage medium is a storage  
25   medium that is capable of retaining the storage contents even after the power of the imaging apparatus

is deactivated, such as a non-volatile storage medium or a volatile storage medium that is energized by a backup battery.

5 6. The imaging apparatus according to any of claims 1 to 5, further comprising a management unit that, when managing the key image data and the image data, performs management by making file management information such as a file name, a folder name, a file  
10 extension name or a file attribute respectively different for the key image data and the image data.

7. The imaging apparatus according to any of claims 1 to 6, further comprising an edit processing unit that  
15 reads the key image data from the second storage medium, edits the key image data that was read, and writes the edited key image data on the second storage medium.

8. The imaging apparatus according to any of claims 1  
20 to 7, further comprising deletion component that deletes the key image data stored in the second storage medium.

9. The imaging apparatus according to any of claims 1  
25 to 8, further comprising copy component that reads the image data stored in the first storage medium and

writes at least one part of the image data that was read on the second storage medium as the key image.

10. A method for controlling an imaging apparatus that is capable of connecting with a removable first storage medium that stores a plurality of image data as an object of image retrieval and a removable second storage medium that stores key image data as a retrieve condition that is generated independently from the image data, comprising the steps of:

reading the key image data from the second storage medium; and

retrieving image data from the first storage medium that is similar to the key image data that was read.

11. A control program that causes an imaging apparatus that is capable of connecting with a removable first storage medium that stores a plurality of image data as an object of image retrieval and a removable second storage medium that stores key image data as a retrieve condition that is generated independently from the image data to implement the steps of:

reading the key image data from the second storage medium; and

retrieving image data from the first storage medium that is similar to the key image data that was read.

- 5 12. An imaging apparatus that is capable of connecting with a removable first storage medium that stores a plurality of image data as an object of image retrieval and a removable second storage medium that stores key image data as a retrieve condition that is generated  
10 independently from the image data, comprising:

reading component that reads the key image data from the second storage medium; and

- retrieval component that retrieves image data from the first storage medium that is similar to the key  
15 image data that was read.

13. An imaging apparatus for recording captured images, comprising:

- connector component that connects image storage  
20 component that stores image data to the imaging apparatus in a removable condition;

- retrieve condition storage component that stores retrieve condition data such as a key image or a keyword for use as a retrieve condition when performing  
25 image retrieval with respect to the image data stored in the image storage component connected to the connector component;

retrieval component that retrieves the image data that matches or is similar to the retrieve condition data from the image storage component connected to the connector component; and

5 internal storage component that accumulatively stores the image data that was retrieved until there is an explicit delete instruction, even when the image storage component was detached from the connector component or was replaced with another image storage  
10 component.

14. The imaging apparatus according to claim 13, wherein the retrieval component retrieves the image data that matches or is similar to the retrieve  
15 condition data from each of a plurality of the image storage component that are sequentially inserted into and removed from the connector unit.

15. The imaging apparatus according to claim 14,  
20 wherein the retrieve condition storage component is a non-volatile storage medium and the retrieve condition data is used commonly with respect to the plurality of image storage component that are sequentially inserted into and removed from the connector unit.

25

16. The imaging apparatus according to claim 14, further comprising:

a power deactivation switch that instructs that the power of the imaging apparatus be deactivated;

non-volatile storage component for saving the retrieve condition data when there is an instruction to  
5 deactivate the power from the power deactivation switch; and

read/write control component that, when the power to the imaging apparatus is reactivated, reads the retrieve condition data from the non-volatile storage  
10 component to write the retrieve condition data in the retrieve condition storage component.

17. The imaging apparatus according to any of claim 13, 14 or 16, further comprising:

15 non-volatile storage component;

selection component that selects whether or not to store the retrieve condition data on the non-volatile storage component when the image retrieval processing ends; and

20 write control component that writes the retrieve condition data on the non-volatile storage component when a selection is made to store the retrieve condition data on the non-volatile storage component.

25 18. The imaging apparatus according to any of claims 13 to 17, further comprising:

flag control component that sets a flag showing that retrieval is in progress at the start of image retrieval processing by the retrieval component and resets the flag at the end of the image retrieval processing;

flag determination component that determines whether the flag is set when the power of the imaging apparatus is activated;

first message display component that, when the flag had been set, displays a message to inquire whether or not to continue the image retrieval processing;

first input component that inputs an instruction as to whether or not to continue the image retrieval processing; and

first continuation instruction component that, when an instruction to continue the image retrieval processing was input, instructs the retrieval component to continue the image retrieval processing.

20

19. The imaging apparatus according to any of claims 13 to 18, further comprising:

second message display component that, when an instruction is given to execute the image retrieval processing, displays a message to inquire whether or not to change the retrieve condition data;



second input component that inputs an instruction to change the retrieve condition data; and

change component that changes the retrieve condition data when an instruction is input to change  
5 the retrieve condition data.

20. The imaging apparatus according to any of claims 13 to 19, further comprising:

third message display component that, when the  
10 image retrieval processing ends for an arbitrary image storage component, displays a message to inquire whether or not to replace the image storage component with a different image storage component and continue the image retrieval processing;

15 third input component that inputs an instruction as to whether or not to continue the image retrieval processing; and

second continuation instruction component that, when an instruction to continue the image retrieval  
20 processing is input and the different image storage component is connected to the connector component, instructs the retrieval component to continue the image retrieval processing.

25 21. The imaging apparatus according to any of claims 13 to 20, further comprising:

writing component that, when the image retrieval processing based on the retrieve condition data ends, writes completion information indicating the completion of the image retrieval processing based on the retrieve condition data onto the image storage component that is  
5 connected to the connector component;

detection component that detects that the image storage component on which the completion information is stored was connected to the connector component; and

10 fourth message display component that, when the connection is detected by the detection component, displays a message indicating that the image retrieval processing for the retrieve condition data has been completed.

15

22. A method for controlling an imaging apparatus that records captured images, comprising the steps of:

connecting image storage component that stores image data to the imaging apparatus in a removable  
20 condition;

reading retrieve condition data such as a key image or a keyword for use as a retrieve condition when performing image retrieval for the image data stored on the image storage component connected to the imaging  
25 apparatus;

retrieving the image data that matches or is similar to the retrieve condition data from the image storage component; and

storing inside the imaging apparatus in an accumulative manner the image data that was retrieved until there is an explicit delete instruction, even when the image storage component was detached from the imaging apparatus or was replaced with a different image storage component.

10

23. A computer program that causes a computer equipped with image storage component that stores image data and is connected to the computer in a removable condition, retrieve condition storage component that stores

15 retrieve condition data such as a key image or a keyword for use as a retrieve condition when performing image retrieval with respect to the image data stored on the image storage component that is connected to the computer, and internal storage component that  
20 accumulatively stores the image data that was retrieved by the image retrieval, to implement the steps of:

reading the retrieve condition data from the retrieve condition storage component;

retrieving the image data that matches or is  
25 similar to the retrieve condition data from the image storage component; and

storing inside the internal storage component in  
an accumulative manner the image data that was  
retrieved until there is an explicit delete instruction,  
even when the image storage component was detached from  
5 the imaging apparatus or was replaced with a different  
image storage component.